

# SCALA NEWS

THE NEWSLETTER FOR LOCAL AUTHORITY CONSTRUCTION PROFESSIONALS



## MAINTENANCE TIME BOMB TICKS ON

Over twenty years of research and feedback have been distilled into the biennial SCALA returns on 'Building Maintenance Expenditure'. The latest edition is hot off the presses and shows that the maintenance expenditure on local authority buildings continues to fall. The average approved budget for 1998/99 is only £8.76 sq. m. which is less than half the assessed need of £18.85 sq.m. This is despite the Chancellor's boost to funding since Labour came to power, although the effect of last year's Comprehensive Spending Review came too late to be reflected in the figures.

The return is based on data from 73 authorities which shows a continuing adjusted fall from an average of £12.35 sq.m. in 1994/95 down to £9.95 sq.m. in 1997/98. Not surprisingly the returns also reveal a worrying trend of increasing expenditure on day to day repairs rather than planned maintenance, with a fall of 6% in planned work and a corresponding increase in day to day expenditure.

SCALA is concerned that the continuing and constantly reducing low levels of expenditure, coupled with the lack of planned maintenance, will lead to faster deterioration of public buildings, such as schools, leading to the need for increased expenditure in the future. With the Government concentrating on 'Education, Education, Education' the benefit of additional classrooms to reduce pupil numbers could well be outweighed by the poor teaching conditions in the remainder of our schools.

Laurence Cooper, Director of Building Surveying at Norfolk County Council and SCALA technical

adviser, illustrates the point when he says "It is not cost effective to put patches on a roof when a new roof is needed. Cutting maintenance now simply stores up trouble and bigger expenditure for the future". In other words, the maintenance 'timebomb' ticks on.

Other noticeable trends include an increase of 7% from 1995/96 to 1997/98 in the % of total expenditure on electrical and mechanical services. SCALA attributes this to a combination of more highly serviced buildings, increased statutory testing requirements and the fact that when budgets are under pressure it is more difficult to cut expenditure in this area.

The effects of any increased expenditure and future trends will be revealed in the next SCALA return on 'Building Maintenance Expenditure', assuming local authorities and their client building managers are in a position to respond. Delegation of authority and budget responsibilities, through 'Fair Funding' and other initiatives,

have made it increasingly difficult to gather the expenditure details necessary to compile the returns. There is a danger that valuable data such as this will not be available in the future having a serious effect on performance indicators in the widest possible sense and consequent policy decisions.

The report, which shows results for all building types except housing, and a wide range of analyses for education buildings, is the only source of information on local authority maintenance expenditure. **See P23 for information on ordering this essential document.**



*A typical example of a lack of planned maintenance now requiring replacement on a school*



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Admin., publicity and editorial matters tel/fax Bernard Wyld on 01273 389323  
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# Your guide to SCALANEWS



## SCALAFEATURE

See also the maintenance feature 'Living with a Building System' by David Mackness

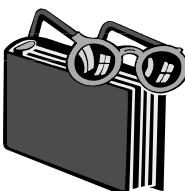
This or a similar logo signifies feature articles on topical issues such as the speech by Alan Howarth on architectural issues included in this edition



## SCALASTUDY DAY:

'System Buildings- Challenges and Opportunities'

All the essential information and guidance that will be given to construction professionals on 21 May at Daventry will be found in the central feature



## SCALADIARY

A reference list of dates for future SCALA meetings and events including those for the regions and associated organisations



## SCALACOMMITTEE FEATURES

These new committee features bring readers up to date on current topics and issues of interest. This issue includes 'Housing & Regeneration Matters'.



## SCALANET

Your 24 hr. contact point on the Internet for the full range of SCALA services and information sources updated regularly at [www.scala.org.uk](http://www.scala.org.uk)



## SCALALETTERS

A section devoted to letters from readers on topical issues or matters of individual concern. Please send me your letters for the next issue.



- P1 'Fall continues in Building Maintenance Expenditure'- the full facts
- P3/4 'Living with a Building System' by David Mackness of CLASP Services
- P5/6 'Housing & Regen. Matters' inc. RIBA Exhibition of 20th.c Housing
- P7/8 'Technical Talk'- EMAS, AMP's, Egan and the BSI update
- P9/10 'Professional Affairs'- update, partnering/PFI and PII
- P11 SCALALetters- client/consultant splits and an Ian Colquhoun update
- P12/13 SCALASTudy Day- 'System Buildings-Challenges and Opportunities': &24 full details of the essential info. & guidance available on 21 May
- P14 SCALADIary- What's on including a preview of SCALA '99 in Sheffield
- P15 SCALANet and the London and S&SE regions visit to the Dome
- P16/21 Speech given by Alan Howarth, Minister for the Arts, on 10 Feb. '99
- P22/23 SCALAResponse to the RIBA Review of Architectural Education
- P23 SCALAPublications inc. the new edition of the Maintenance Return

Please note that the closing date for copy for the next issue is Fri. 21 May.

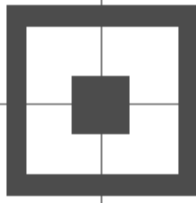
**Next edition on PARTNERING. Articles & letters please- Ed.**



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**CLASP**  
Development  
Group

## LIVING WITH A BUILDING SYSTEM by David Mackness-Manager of CLASP Services

Children are a blessing and a curse. One minute you think they are great the next you are over come by disbelief at their actions. CLASP's child, which goes by the parent's name, is no exception. Although it is in its 42nd year living with a building system is not easy and living with this child certainly has its ups and downs.

**DEVELOPMENT OF THE TECHNOLOGY**  
Life now is quite different from 1957 when CLASP was born. Then there was work to be done. Funding was more certain if not plentiful. Programmes tended to be predictable and not based on individual bids. Teachers were hired to teach and the LEA looked after the property. But now, we are all too familiar with the now.



1960's  
PRE-CAST  
CONCRETE  
FOUNDATION

Different circumstances have given rise to changes in the CLASP technology. For example, in the early 70's the consortium introduced a range of high quality self finished components to reduce maintenance costs. These changes have proved a worth while investment. But now we find that the product is too sophisticated to be maintained by a building custodian with limited expertise available. The

KISS principle has become the order of the day. The technology is being dumbed down to meet the new circumstances. Fashion dictated that CLASP technology could never stand still. It has moved from one mark to the next at regular intervals. The precast foundation has given away to an insitu concrete slab. Concrete panels have been replaced by brickwork. Pitched roofs have become the norm and flat roofs the exception. But in the process some of its original ingenuity and creative approach to construction has been lost only the core structure of the pin-jointed frame on a thin slab remains the same.

**RENEWED CLARITY OF PURPOSE**  
As a Local Authority organisation CLASP had to rethink its position in the mid 90's. The fall in the number of capital projects, fragmentation of the client base and the trend to externalise services caused an in depth review. From what position could the Consortium best serve its Members and Users?

The Consortium decided its future lay firmly in the public sector, remaining as a Local Authority organisation focusing on the primary objective to add value. The loss of experienced staff from Authorities, together with the growth of refurbishment projects on system buildings convinced the Consortium that there was a need for it to continue. Following on from this decision the Consortium reorganised the Development Group and with renewed clarity of purpose has seen growth in its membership and workload.

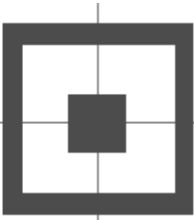
**STRENGTH IN SOUND PRINCIPLES**  
Raising a child with sound principles is not easy especially when they are not in fashion. The collaboration of the 60's and 70's gave way to competition in the 80's and 90's. Only now, as we welcome the new millennium do we see the re-emergence of partnership as a real option for the public sector. The Consortium has a strong sense of



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*(Cont.)*

public service. From its earliest days it saw itself as on a mission to improve construction standards in the public sector. Despite fashions changing in architectural style and methods of operation CLASP has maintained, albeit somewhat stretched and strained three key principles; working through collaboration, seeking to add value and joining in partnership with the private sector.

Collaboration requires active consultation, which drives the response to change to remain relevant. It means resources and expertise are pooled with an opportunity for a wider sharing of ideas, a cross-checking. This collaboration has led to a refinement of the technology, methods of procurement and the services provided by the Consortium.

The Consortium has developed and promoted CLASP in partnership with the private sector. A strong input was received from Brockhouse the first steel frame supplier. Together they exported CLASP around Europe. A joint venture with Tarmac enabled 4, 240 bed hospitals to be built in 24 months in North Africa. Today the Consortium works with LB Structures to make CLASP technology available to the private sector. Health projects in the Southeast and Northwest have already been completed. The pursuit of added value is a fundamental objective written into the Consortium's constitution. To maximise added value you must invest. For the Consortium this means setting staff aside to develop technical solutions and to undertake exercises which will enable members derive a future benefit. This year the Consortium committed itself to building an ICT infrastructure to make available its archive and technical information. This is an important step that will drive the future development of the Consortium.

### CLASP today

Maintenance and refurbishment have become key areas of work. The Consortium makes available national maintenance programmes that are pre tender and pre designed. Programmes are in place for recladding, replacement windows refelting. Guidance is available for over roofing projects.

Hotline support is provided for the Consortium's Maintenance Study Group members' and gives immediate access to the expertise of the Development Group. The Consortium's archive of system building details is a valuable asset that has the potential to save hours of research work and is available to all local



A WARWICKSHIRE SCHOOL

authorities.

The CLASP system continues to be used for new buildings. Benefits of speed of construction, value for money and efficiency within the office encourage Users to return to the system. The 1998/99 programme contained a police HQ and secondary and primary school projects. Almost all were brick clad with pitched roofs. Tenders are in the order of the DfEE guideline costs. The Consortium offers a working drawing service.

### CLOSE

Why do we continue with the child of CLASP when it is a mixed blessing? I guess because we recognise in it, and the process by which it was produced, the potential to meet a fundamental need. And perhaps, however imperfectly worked out, we can not bring ourselves to abandon the pursuit of an ideal.

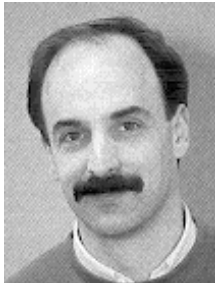
REPLACEMENT WINDOWS AT A NOTTS SCHOOL



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# SCALAHOUSING & REGENERATION MATTERS: a new committee feature

*Ian Atkinson*

*Chairman of the Housing & Regeneration Committee*

I referred to this committee at our last AGM as SCALA's social conscience and I sincerely hold the view that SCALA as a public sector society needs at its core to wrestle with and help combat the issues of social exclusion and so consider the ways in which we as architects in the public sector can help or more importantly be instrumental in the ambition of government - to invest in regeneration but provide meaningful sustainable solutions. At the heart of these ambitions are community focus and a responsiveness to local priorities, most importantly recognising that physical improvement solutions are not the only mechanism/solution. It is the broad based architectural skills that we are able to bring to bear that make our potential contribution so important. Analysis, innovation, procurement knowledge, strategy, planning knowledge, an understanding of legal frameworks and design awareness are all part of our portfolio. I am reminded of David Taylor's (ex English Partnerships) call for architects to step out of the narrow design framework and get a 'proper job'. He was of course being provocative but as public sector architects we are appropriately prepared and placed for the over arching work of delivering Regeneration programmes.

The Committee is currently assisting Andy Beard (the Vice President) to prepare the SCALA Conference. The whole basis of the Conference is to present best practice regeneration projects and so enthuse the membership to take a pivotal regeneration role. One of the outcomes will be a publication of the papers presented as a reference for future actions.

I hope you have noticed that Housing is now high on the construction and political agenda. On the one hand there is the huge demand for additional new households to meet the predicted needs of an ageing population, the aspirations of the young and the strained middle years of separated parents. Another aspect is the billions of pounds

worth of maintenance backlog in the public housing stock, never mind (as yet) the growing maintenance problems for housing associations, and beyond that the private householder. For the LA housing stock the scale of the maintenance problems are well beyond any government funding and ironically the older the stock the lower the rent income that might begin to create a revenue account fund.

Sheffield like many other authorities is having to carry out what can best be described as a Housing Asset Management Plan. They have revisited the analysis of the stock, demand trends, demographic trends and 'customer' aspiration. There are all too many examples of investment that has been directed to the wrong housing in the wrong area because the strategy wasn't there to guide it and in some instances Government funding (e.g. through Estate Action) actually made the skewing of funds even worse. Of course housing management practices are an issue but all in all the overview needs to be taken in a new light. We have to be realistic about funding options. The solutions are going to be a mixture of SRB, public, private partnerships, large scale voluntary transfer (LSVT) and the Private Finance Initiative (PFI). This is all now (quite rightly) in a best value context. Is the housing delivered and improved in the future going to be better quality, and better maintained at a equal or lower price? It will have to be! Its time to do the analysis and look at your options and mechanisms.

PFI examples are emerging and a useful guide 'PFI and social housing' (the potential for increasing private sector investment) has just been produced by the '4P's' and published by the LGA. The big turn around for the financing industry has been that of financial returns on quality housing that exceed inflation and are proven as more reliable as long term investment than the commercial sector. Funders are interested in the social housing market as well as the private rented sector.

Ideas for housing innovation have

*Public housing & maintenance*

*Social issues*

*Best Value*

*Sustainable development*

*Regeneration*

*Environmental issues*

*Housing management*

*Innovative Housing etc.*



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BYKER



CAMDEN GDNS.



LETCHWORTH



ROY SQUARE



BARBICAN

(cont.) since the RIBA/Rowntree Trust Initiative and even mainstream private housing providers are now embracing new ideas and technologies. The Integer House currently being presented on TV by Carol Vorderman is one of many. The popularisation of Housing issues is great news. Even the Ideal Home Exhibition both last year and this year has broken from the suburban 'dreamworld' to challenge the norms.

The overall trend of increasingly environmentally conscious design is aided by John Prescott who through DETR is slowly forcing a revolution. It is clear, if intentions run through, that city and rural townships are all to be urban villages in a sense that ideally life, work and play should be walkable. Sustainable communities don't exist on motorways

and certainly don't enjoy healthy living from the end of a car exhaust.

This spread of analysis is the bread and butter of the committee. If anything restrains our endeavours it is numbers and I am very keen to invite members from the various regions to join us. We need to be out and about much more and the greatest benefit is to be gained from viewing work done on the ground and hearing from those pushing at the boundaries of the possible. I will be sending a letter out to the Regional Convenors and targeting members in the very near future. Of course I would be pleased to be contacted by anyone who wants to join us or offer to host a visit to show us how you are meeting the Housing and Regeneration challenge. I look forward to new contacts!



## RIBAEXHIBITION of 20th.c HOUSING

One of the most significant marks of a civilised society is the quality of the housing in which its people live. At long last the Government is giving serious thought to housing issues in Britain which everyone with an interest surely welcomes, not least the people whose urgent need for better living conditions is not being met. But the issues are too great to leave them to politicians and experts alone. The debate must be broadened to involve society as a whole and as many people as possible should help to form the country's home and environment for future generations to enjoy.

To stimulate this debate, the Royal Institute of British Architects is staging a landmark exhibition which looks at British housing across the 20<sup>th</sup> c. from 1900 to the present day.

The exhibition is entitled a Century of British Housing. It will illustrate the best of British Housing built since 1900 with the aim of highlighting the experience that should influence the policies of the future. It picks up the theme already promoted by the principle sponsor, English Heritage, that the best projects built during the century should receive national recognition for the quality of their design through being included in the list of the country's buildings of architectural and historical significance. It will be the first housing exhibition to emphasise the superb achievement of the last twenty years in regenerating Britain's problem estates. In this and in so many areas of housing Britain leads the world as it has done for most of the century.

The exhibition will be supported by the book, The RIBA Book of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century British Housing, published by the Architectural Press.

The exhibition can be seen at the RIBA Architectural Centre, 66 Portland Place from 27 May to 25 June and thereafter in other venues around the country. It will be opened on Wed. 26 May at 6.00 p.m. by Sir Jocelyn Stevens, the Chairman of English Heritage.

The exhibition and book will be launched on 26 May 1999 at the RIBA in London.

Exhibition Sponsors: English Heritage, Wilmott Dixon Limited, The University of Lincolnshire and Humberside, PRP Architects, SCALA, Wilson Havenhand Fox, Architects  
Supporting Book, The RIBA Book of 20<sup>th</sup> Century British Housing by Ian Colquhoun, Architectural Press.

Books by Ian Colquhoun are:

Colquhoun, I., & Fauset, P.G. Housing Design in Practice (Longman UK, 1991)

Colquhoun, I., & Fauset, P.G. Housing Design & International Perspective (B.T.Batsford 1991, £60 now £25)

Colquhoun, I., Urban Regeneration (B.T.Batsford, 1995, £50 now £12.50)

Colquhoun, I., The RIBA book of 20th.c British Housing (Architectural Press, 1999, £25)



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**Mukund Patel**

*Chairman of the Technical Committee*

## SCALATECHNICAL TALK

### LA - EMAS (THE EC ECO - MANAGEMENT & AUDIT SCHEME FOR UK LOCAL GOVERNMENT)

On 24th February 1999 SCALA South West Region held a Study Day on EMAS which generated considerable interest. The main speaker was Martin Baxter, the EMAS Manager from the EMAS Competent Body, part of the Institute of Environmental Assessment. Three other speakers were from Local Authorities, one of which had achieved EMAS accreditation for all departments. The subject is one which should be of interest to all local Authorities.

LA-EMAS is a voluntary scheme whose aim is to promote positive environmental management in local authorities, and to provide information to the public about the environmental performance of participating councils. It is strongly supported by the Government and has the backing of the Local Government Management Board and Local Government Association. Implementing the scheme represents one of the major Local Agenda 21 steps that an authority can take.

An introductory guide for local authorities, guidance notes and other EMAS information (including a video) is available from :- LA-EMAS Help-Desk, LGMB, Layden House, 76-86 Turnmill Street, London, EC1M 5QU

Tel/fax: 0171 296 6598/6666

E-mail: local.agenda.21@lgmb.gov.uk

available to help with the production of AMPs. Launch events for the new information were held at the RIBA on 5th March and repeated on 16th March attended by 75% of LEAs.

An interactive website has been established ([www.pillar.saqnet.co.uk/amp.htm](http://www.pillar.saqnet.co.uk/amp.htm)) and this contains general AMP information, a newsletter, response forms, software supplier information and a discussion forum. The site is linked to the DfEE and software suppliers websites by hyperlinks and the service on the internet is free. Pillar Consultancy are resourcing the initiative (which is aimed at being self funding) for DfEE.

The next stage of the AMP Information Network is the setting up of Regional User Groups, the first area meetings of which will be held in May. These will be addressed by DfEE and selected members of the Focus Group of the DfEE and authorities formed to lead this initiative and will also have group workshop sessions. Attendance will include Property, Education and IT professionals. A response planning deadline of the end of March has been set for those local authorities wishing to take part. Regions may be based on the DfEE out reach territorial areas.

Subject to the demand it is likely that part time area organisers will be recruited to lead activity in each region. A telephone helpdesk is being considered and may be provided by the linking together of area organisers on a rota basis. The area organiser role could be carried out by a local authority but is more likely to be of interest to a recently retired property professional - perhaps a SCALA retired member?

Contact Pillar Consultancy:-

Tel/fax: 01452 525241/303909

*Asset Management Plans*

*Maintenance Survey*

*Best Value*

*BSI*

*Benchmarking*

*Study Day*

*Skills database*

*Priority issues etc.*

### ASSET MANAGEMENT PLANNING INFORMATION NETWORK

On 25th February 1999 DfEE issued three new sections of Asset Management Planning guidance information to local authorities together with details of how £7 million pounds has been made

### RE-THINKING CONSTRUCTION - THE EGAN REPORT

Described as "Latham with attitude", the Egan Report presents a hard-hitting series of concerns identified by the Committee as those which plague the construction industry. These include low profitability, client dissatisfaction and fragmentation.

The report details areas for improve-

ment which include almost revolutionary ideas (to the typical Local Government officer) such as partnering and standardisation & pre-assembly. It goes on to suggest that there is scope for Local Authorities to take the lead by altering the way that it deals with the commissioning of both new work and building maintenance.

Forget competitive tendering and a

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large number of contractors. Look instead for a small number of contractors who work in a non-competitive way to target mutually agreed objectives in an open manner. Impose your standards and practices on the contractor. Share your future programme with the contractor. Give him some security so that he can invest in his company's future - you will reap the benefit.

In this way standards will rise. As the contractor shares in the success, he will - it is perceived - inaugurate innovation with better/quicker/cheaper methods, thereby improving not only the service to the Client but also contributing to the success of the industry.

Can we afford to ignore the Report? I think not. The members of the Committee were selected from major clients and, while the Report may not have the power of law, it presents very strong cli-

ent views which we ignore at our peril.

The Report offers to Local Government a life line that it can grasp and pull itself up from the situation where the lowest wins and standards as well as prices are constantly driven down. An opportunity, yes, but also a threat. It could be conceived that cost savings would also be derived on the Client side where a reduction in professional expertise would be the eventual result.

Who will drive through the changes? Pressures already exist on the Client side. Chief Executives are likely to see the Report as a useful tool in implementing radical reforms. Under these circumstances, should we not grasp the nettle and lead from the front rather than be driven from behind?

**Laurence.Cooper.nps@norfolk.gov.uk**  
Tel/fax: 01603 222621/222719

The resolution to change from wire to plate thermocouples in the furnaces for the testing of fire doors has been noted and accepted in Europe. The document is to go out as a draft for public comment. The UK delegation are asking BSI to object on the grounds of poor technical content, change in content between different drafts and testing which has given variable results.

Work is proceeding on small scale test procedures for hardware. This includes fire resistance testing and would therefore allow the possibility of changing hardware on a fire door within the same category without needing to retest the doorset for fire resistance.

The British Plastics Federation are meeting to draft a specification for unglazed windows. If this gains general agreement it may be issued as a Product Assessment Specification.

Two Product Assessment Specifications are due for official announcement:-

PAS 23: General security performance requirements for door assemblies Part 1: single leaf, external domestic assemblies.

PAS 24: Enhanced security performance requirements for door assemblies Part 1: single leaf, external domestic assemblies.

BSI Product Services (the arm of BSI now looking after product certification

schemes such as Kitemarks) are proposing to launch a certification scheme for the installation of windows and doors (of any materials). The scheme would be in the form of a Product Assessment Specification and would certify the installation (not the installer). It would be supported by an insurance-backed guarantee, effective even if the installing company were still solvent (most current insurance schemes kick in when the contractor has gone into liquidation).

Dr Eli Kienwald sits on the small panel which is working on a draft specification for this certification scheme and has given the scheme his qualified support. As you may imagine industry (BPF, BWF and CAB) is not so keen on the grounds that they do not think the scheme will be taken up.

Would SCALA members please provide Dr Eli Keinwald with indications of their support or otherwise for a Kitemark for installation of windows and doors as described above, so that he may use their views in the likely arguments he will have with industry. Please contact:

Dr. Eli Kienwald  
Tel/fax: 0181 5614700/5611130  
Email: lhcbcs@globalnet.co.uk Or  
Mike Phillips  
Tel/fax: 01733 742208/742222



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## SCALAPROFESSIONAL AFFAIRS

*Richard  
Winter*

*Chairman  
of the Prof.  
Affairs  
Committee*

Since my report in the New Year SCALANEWS the committee has been active in pushing forward on a number of current initiatives, as well as picking up new ones as they emerge:

- On the **PROFESSIONAL INDEMNITY INSURANCE** front I am studying specialist Counsel advice to help 'round off' the draft guidance note that has been already circulated to all SCALA members. You may find some 'update notes' elsewhere in this edition of SCALANEWS - as long as my information comes through ahead of Bernard's publication deadline!
- SCALA's need to reprint its highly popular **AGREEMENT FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF CONSULTANTS** has meant priority work in updating it. Expert legal advice has been obtained to ensure all latest relevant legislation is incorporated and the new guide should thus be even more 'essential reading'. And see more notes below on further 'good news' and just HOW valuable - and user friendly - this SCALA guide is.
- On **PARTNERING AND PFIs** I have been gathering information - and there is certainly plenty to gather! In order to rationalise this, Following the Mach Council meeting I am working with the President in drawing up a proforma to ensure useful data is collated and presented efficiently and swiftly. Again *a plea to all readers*: What we need are SCALA-relevant Partnering / PFI examples from **YOU!** So please pick up your pen **NOW**, jot down your relevant experiences in summary on the return slip opposite and photocopy it to me, or send on FAX 01296 382776.
- "VISION" - **The Future Of Architectural Education**: an RIBA consultation paper by Sir Colin Stansfield-Smith. This came to the PA Subcommittee for action and Jeff Gibson and I worked together to consider and despatch the necessary response. Many thanks particularly to Jeff for this. I expect the response to be in the 'letters' pages of this SCALANEWS, by the way.
- An **IMPORTANT REFINEMENT IN MANAGING CDM ON OUR PROJECTS** has emerged from recent discussions in Buckinghamshire with the HSE, probably reflecting the benefits of a year or two's experience in managing the legislation. It seems eminently sensible and simply this:  
*Particularly in schools projects (perhaps also housing?) it is essential that the school headteacher or premises manager (perhaps, say, the tenant?) - the site-based 'client' - is notified formally of the name, address etc of the CDM Planning Supervisor (and of changes, if any, during the commission / contract).*  
In the case of Buckinghamshire's established CDM practices (that had originally been endorsed by the HSE): These had not incorporated this straightforward notification guidance so it occurred to me that this may equally apply in other cases, too, perhaps yours?
- Other aspects of Professional Affairs are continually cropping up but it is worth keeping a close eye on what looks to be retrograde but potentially contagious practice emerging in **CENTRAL GOVERNMENT BUILDING PROCUREMENT**.

*Legal &  
insurance  
matters*

*Best Value*

*EU issues*

*Benchmarking*

*Contract  
documents*

*Public  
architecture*

*Procurement  
CDM etc.*

### 'Agreement for the Appointment of Consultants'

*I refer above a matter relating to the reprint of this Document: A ringing endorsement has been received from our legal 'update' advisor on first reading the current document - something he was doing to ensure all legal updates are in place. He commended it for its straightforward comprehensible language and helpful brevity. He is strongly recommending the (updated) document to his own Local Authority. Such (unsolicited) praise should convince us all that we need to purchase the new version when it is printed in a month's time. Ring me or David Kimmins to pre-order yours now - it should be another sell-out edition!*

It was agreed at Council on 26<sup>th</sup> March that I should take over the chairmanship of the PA subcommittee permanently. I would formally **record my thanks to Ian Vincent**, former chairman, who ensured the groundwork was maintained and who has been so helpful



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*(Cont.)*

**RETURN SLIP: SUMMARY OF PARTNERING and / or PFI EXPERIENCES**

Name of Contact: .....  
Local Authority / .....  
Address / .....

tel: / fax / email: .....  
Headline /summary of relevant experiences (extend to other sheet if necessary)  
.....  
.....

Return: Richard Winter, Head of Architecture, Bucks CC, Aylesbury, Bucks, HP20 1UX or email to richard.winter1@virgin.net or tel/fax 01296 382079/382776

**UPDATE NOTE: PROFESSIONAL INDEMNITY INSURANCE (PII)**

SCALA members will have received the January 99 draft of the SCALA PII Update paper along with the New Year SCALANEWS. This requested comments and corrections from members and others interested in the subject.

I have heard back from a couple of members, but these were not suggesting expansion or correction. Concurrently here in Buckinghamshire there has been committee discussion during March 1999 on this topic, and in particular considering the updating of what has been a 1991 vintage Committee resolution defining the Council's employee indemnity. Issues arising from that discussion and the new indemnity clause for officers are to be incorporated in what should be the final draft of the SCALA PII Update Note. I hope this will be finalised prior to the next SCALA Council in May and, subject to formal approval, may be first made available to those attending the Daventry Study Day on May 21<sup>st</sup>.

The most important clarification (certainly for me) arising from the latest discussions on this topic relates to the indemnity for those of us involved in work for Trusts and so on - particularly since this is the type of work that is becoming ever more prevalent. The case that has set so many hares running in relation to the cover that Councils can provide in such instances is that of *Burgoyne and Cooke v London Borough of Waltham Forest*. The clarity that I have gleaned lately from our County Council lawyers is that this particular case cannot be regarded as typical because in that instance the actual activity of the

Council (and within which the officers in question were seeking to rely upon their Council's indemnity cover), was apparently deemed ultra vires. And in such circumstances a Council cannot legally protect its employees. Furthermore, the officers' situation would also, apparently, be deemed commercially uninsurable.

But what is equally clear is that if work for Trusts, Companies etc. is being undertaken with the Council's agreement (and presuming that work is 'legal'), then the Council is indeed empowered to indemnify the employee in the same way as if the work had been directly on Council business. And this validates the incorporation of such cover within the model indemnity contained in the SCALA draft update and indeed, cover contained in Buckinghamshire's new employee indemnity clause, mentioned above, that contains the phrase "*whether they were acting for the Council itself or another person or body with the Council's consent*".

An important but separate issue emerging from Buckinghamshire's committee paper relates to **member indemnity**. Whilst a Council is empowered to indemnify its employees (effectively as a term or condition of their employment), the Council is NOT so empowered to indemnify elected members. So our members have been provided with information on how and where personal cover can be secured - if they wish to take it up. And it is important to note that this would have to be personally paid for - it cannot be charged to expenses, for example.

I will be pleased to receive comments, expansion or corrections on any of the above, please contact me on richard.



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## SCALALETTERS

### CALLING ALL INVOLVED IN CLIENT / CONSULTANT SPLITS

I have been acting as a central 'clearing house' in an exchange of information in recent months among an informally assembled group of 5 local authorities. All are operating (in disciplines relating to architecture, property, repairs & maintenance etc) an 'in house' client core with an externalised (or partially externalised) operational wing. This is proving helpful - all seem agreed that sharing of data is valuable. The group constitutes a



*Ian Colquhoun*

I have always enjoyed my association with SCALA both as a full member when I was Hull City Architect and the years from 1992 as a retired member. In the future, as the RIBA is undergoing such change, I can see SCALA playing an even more important role for local authority architects as a body. For my part I hope to be able to assist the work of Ian Atkinson's housing group.

Most of my time now is spent teaching and researching the housing and urban development in various Universities. The University of Lincolnshire and Humberside (Hull School of Architecture) made me a Professor in 1995 and I now have the good fortune of working in my specialist area of knowledge without a great burden of administration. My recent research, undertaken in association with the RIBA Housing Group, has led to the publication by the Architectural Press (Butterworth Heinemann) of a book entitled The RIBA Book of 20<sup>th</sup> Century British Housing. This is my fourth book produced since 1991. It costs £25 which is much less than the others although the two are now on the discount market at very low prices. I was considerably helped by Chris Johnson, SCALA President in the production of this book and I am extremely grateful to him for his help.

The Hull School of Architecture is now busy converting it into an exhibition which will be at the RIBA, 66 Portland Place, from 26 May for a month and thereafter at other venues around the country including the SCALA conference this Autumn. English Heritage is the

KEEP THOSE LETTERS & INFO. FLOWING INTO YOUR OWN DEBATING FORUM

small and specialised benchmarking exercise in an area of activity where such information is sparse.

If any authority or organisation wishes to join in this process, they will be most welcome. Please contact me and I will explain what has been done so far and the information to which new 'members' could add and have access. We are also considering further areas it may be useful to examine in future.

**Richard Winter**- Chairman of the Professional Affairs Committee.

major sponsor with others including Wil-mott Dixon plc, SCALA and PRP Architects. The exhibition is entitled A Century of British Housing and it includes many schemes designed by local authority architects throughout the 100 years up to the current achievements in the area of housing estate regeneration.

Housing Design in Practice was translated into Japanese in 1994 by Professor Yukawa of Nara University which has resulted in my visiting Japan to lecture and teach there on a number of occasions. Chiba University employed me for three months earlier this year as a Visiting Professor which proved to be one of the greatest experiences of my life. They currently build 1.5 million new homes every year and we have so much to learn from their experience of housing and urban development. I do hope that SCALA will one day allow a little time at a seminar for me to talk about the country, its architecture and its people.

I am also working with Steve George on a research and development project in Sofia, Bulgaria. Funded by the British Council, the project is looking to the future of the concrete system built housing of the 1960's using public participation techniques that Steve has experienced through his work on enveloping in Birmingham and his recent estate regeneration work in Hull.

All of this keeps me very busy and it is such a contrast to the work I once did.

**We hope to see Ian at the Study Day and SCALA '99. For details of his books see page 6- Ed.**



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# SCALA STUDY DAY

21 MAY 1999 at DAVENTRY



**Essential information and guidance  
for construction professionals  
involved in the assessment,  
repair, refurbishment and extension  
of all system building types**



About 40% of all local authority housing, education and general projects in the 60's & 70's were system built. Many are at a critical maintenance cycle stage with a fast disappearing knowledge base. With **CLASP** sponsorship the Study Day will give practical advice on how to deal with these buildings through case studies and workshop sessions.

**CLASP** is a consortium of local authorities committed to developing designs and procedures that add value to the whole building process operating on the basis of collaboration between it's members and partnership with the private sector. Through it's collaborative Maintenance Study Group it has an unrivalled knowledge of all the lightweight steel framed systems and is committed to making this available to all those involved in maintenance and refurbishment. For more information contact David



**STUDY DAY BOOKING**  
*SAVE £10 BOOK BY 28 APRIL*

- Delegate booking by 28 April @ £85  (tick)  
 Delegate booking after 28 April @ £95  (tick)  
 Retired member @ £50  (tick)  
 Additional day delegates from the same office @ £50  (insert no.)  
 Dinner B&B on Thursday night @ £72  (insert no.)  
 Please indicate any special dietary requirements:

Please **DO NOT INCLUDE PAYMENT** with your booking as you will be invoiced separately.  
 All prices are subject to VAT at the standard rate.

Name:  
 Title:  
 Dept:  
 Auth:  
 Address:

Post code:                      Tel:  
    Fax:

Email:

*Please note that bookings cancelled up to 1 May will be subject to a cancellation charge of £40 and that no refund can be given after that date.*

Workshop places will be reserved in order of booking, space allowing. Please indicate your priorities by putting 1, 2 or 3 in the boxes for each session as appropriate:

SESSION 1		SESSION 2	
Concrete Claddings	<input type="checkbox"/>	Over roofing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Extensions & alterations	<input type="checkbox"/>	Energy implications	<input type="checkbox"/>
Option Appraisal	<input type="checkbox"/>	Asset management Plans	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please return your completed booking form to:



David Kimmins  
 SCALA Finance Manager  
 3 Manor Park  
 Ruddington  
 NOTTINGHAM NN4 6DS  
 Tel/fax 0115 9846784  
 e-mail: policy@scala.org.uk



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## STUDY DAY SPEAKERS

**David Mackness** will explore adding value to tired 60's system buildings to create a valued asset, why the systems were developed, features that are useful and those that are not, and good maintenance and refurbishment solutions. A QS who has worked in Local Government since 1974, mainly specialising in building economics, and Manager of CLASP Services since 1994.

**Ian Atkinson** is a principal architect with Sheffield City Council and will describe a cautious approach to system housing refurbishment with technical solutions based on a detailed knowledge of construction, structural conditions and maintenance costs. He will show how investment needs to be in a housing management context and the importance of housing mix and profiles.

**Peter Sharrat** is a partner in Short & Assocs. specialising in natural ventilation principles used at Manchester's Contact Theatre and the new deep plan Coventry University library. The 1960's system built Fletcher Building at Leicester University will demonstrate how energy saving and improved comfort conditions can be cost effective without conventional mechanical systems.

**Julian Taylor** has wide experience of refurbishment of system housing and schools using the Structherm structural external wall insulation and fastbuild system for housing and education contracts. He is a structural engineer with 7 years experience in private practice. Since 1988 he has been responsible for the development of the structural claddings at Structherm.

**Robert Thompson** is the CLASP Group Architect with wide experience in system construction and a particular interest in the use of CAD. The workshop will look at the practicalities and opportunities when extending system building, the approaches to be avoided and how CAD can be used to develop solutions efficiently in the office.

**Roger Taylor** will explain option appraisal in terms of quantifiable, unquantifiable, monetary and non-monetary costs and benefits. His experience includes 7 years with a major contractor, 16 with local authorities, and 12 with private practice. A partner in BPTW with experience in the refurbishment of housing estates, working with residents, local authorities, and housing associations.

**Ian Gibbins** is an architect with over 30 years experience of system development and application. He is principal architect with L B Structures who hold the CLASP steelwork nomination and have designed, supplied and erected steel frames for many building systems with wide experience in the extension and over-roofing of system buildings. The workshop will cover over-roofing, re-cladding, and extending steel framed systems.

**BRECSU** are leaders in the field of energy performance assessment and manage the DETR Energy and Best Practice Programme. Martin Cook is an architect and project manager with 20 years experience. Sean Lockie has a property management background and is project manager of the education sector in BRECSU. The workshop will look at energy performance assessment and upgrading methods.

**Alan Jones** is Chief QS at the DfEE Architects and Building Branch. He is deeply involved in the development of the asset management procedures which are used to assess funding bids for education projects and are likely to become the accepted methodology for other building types.

**Gwyn Hobson** is Assistant Director of Property Services at Stoke on Trent City Council and will be describing their 25 year energy related PFI scheme covering the Authority's entire estate of 122 schools. This ground breaking approach is likely to become a model for future large scale funding.



## STUDY DAY PROGRAMME

- 9.45 Registration, coffee and viewing of exhibitors stands**
- 10.15 Introduction** by Mukund Patel  
Chairman of SCALA Technical Committee
- 10.20 Living with system buildings**  
David Mackness, CLASP Dev. Group
- 10.45 Look before you leap**  
Ian Atkinson, Sheffield City Council
- 11.15 Coffee and viewing of stands**
- 11.30 Who needs mechanical ventilation?**  
Peter Sharrat, Short and Associates
- 11.55 Question time and discussion forum**
- 12.10 Workshops:**
  - 1A Structural & non-structural claddings**  
Julian Taylor, Structherm
  - 1B Extending & altering system buildings**  
Robert Thompson, CLASP Dev. Group
  - 1C A framework for option appraisal**  
Roger Taylor. BPTW
- 12.50 Lunch and viewing of stands**
- 13.50 Workshops:**
  - 2A Over-roofing and extending**  
Ian Gibbins, LB Structures
  - 2B Energy implications of refurbishment**  
Shaun Lockie and Martin Cook, BRECSU
  - 2C Asset management plans**  
Alan Jones, DfEE
- 14.30 It's the only game in town**  
Gwyn Hobson, Stoke on Trent City Council
- 14.55 Tea and viewing of stands**
- 15.10 The Hertfordshire approach**— Barry Newman & Richard Brewster of Herts, John Solomon of AMF
- 15.35 The 2nd. machine age-Egan & the future**  
Nick Whitehouse, Terrapin International
- 16.00 Questions and summing up**
- 16.15 Conclusion of the Study Day**

**Hertfordshire** was the cradle of lightweight steel frame system buildings many having been adapted or refurbished. A panel discussion and case study will draw on their extensive experience. Barry Newman is a principal architect with Herts, John Solomon is design services partner with AFM Consulting and Richard Brewster is a senior project officer responsible for their asbestos removal programme.

**Nick Whitehouse** will be talking about the future of system and modular construction post Egan. Past Chairman of Architects in Industry & Commerce he is an expert in the principles and practice of prefabrication, framed systems, transportable accommodation and the theory and principles of the integration of design, manufacture and construction. After a period as an architect at Notts CC he moved to Secometric as Chief Architect and then Terrapin in 1973, becoming Managing Director in



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**Andy  
Beard**  
**SCALA  
Vice  
President**

## SCALA '99 in Sheffield- 11-13 Nov.

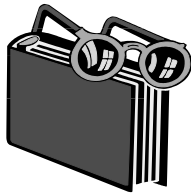
Plans are already well advanced for this year's SCALA '99, which will explore some of the key roles that architects and the public sector can play in regeneration. It's aim will be to illustrate the new opportunities for public sector architects in this vital part of the Government's current agenda.

The Housing and Regeneration Committee are currently searching out suitable case studies that are inspirational and will provide SCALA members with lots of useful ideas to take away. Richard Caborn, the Minister for Regions, Regeneration and Planning has agreed to give the keynote speech, and a member of Lord Rogers Urban Taskforce has also agreed to speak.

The event will take place in a variety of exciting venues in the centre of Shef-

field - currently the focus of several major regeneration projects. The AGM and a Civic reception will take place in the magnificent Victorian Town Hall on the evening of Thursday 11 November. The seminar itself will be in the award winning Ponds Forge International Sports Centre and the Conference Dinner, celebrating 25 years of SCALA, will be in Branson Coates striking new National Centre for Popular Music. A tour of new projects in Sheffield will take place on Saturday 13 November.

This will be a memorable event, preparing public sector architects for the expanding roles demanded of them by modern local government in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Put the dates in your diary now and await further details in the summer. You cannot afford to miss it!



## SCALADIARY

### MAY

- 18- SW Region meeting in Taunton
- 20- \*SCALA Professional Affairs Committee
- \*SCALA Policy Committee
- \*SCALA Council at Britannia Hotel, Daventry

\* Please note these meetings are now a day earlier in Daventry

- 21- SCALA Study Day on 'System Buildings- Challenges & Opportunities' at Daventry

### JUNE

- 16- NW Region meeting (venue to be agreed)
- 17- SCALA Technical Committee at RIBA
- 18- SCALA Housing & Regeneration Committee (venue to be agreed)
- 23- Y&H Region meeting in Leeds

### JULY

- 16- SCALA Professional Affairs Committee
- SCALA Policy Committee
- SCALA Council at RIBA

### SEPTEMBER

- 2/3- RIBA/SCALA conference- 'Schools in the Community: Lessons for the Future' at the University of Sheffield (for further information see enclosed flyer)
- 16- NW Region meeting (venue to be agreed)
- 17- SCALA Professional Affairs Committee
- SCALA Policy Committee
- SCALA Council at RIBA

CIPFA/SCALA 15th. Series of workshops on Construction & Property Services: 8 June London, 10 June Bulth Wells, 11 June Preston, 14 June Taunton, 17 June Durham, 18 June Leeds, 28 & 29 June Stirling, 2 July Stratford on Avon, 6 July London.

CIPFA/SCALA 16th. Series of workshops on Construction & Property Services: 13 Sept. London, 15 Sept. Durham, 16 Sept. Leeds, 20 Sept. Bulth Wells, 21 Sept. Preston, 23

For info. on the CIPFA/SCALA Advisory Service on Best Value workshops for Construction & Property Services contact Ed. or CAS direct on 0171 340 1206



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# SCALAREGIONS: London and South & S.East regions visit to the Millennium Dome on 26 Jan.



Our President and a group of members admire the Dome interior which covers a total of 20 acres and is supported by 12 columns and 70km. of cables.



Photography by Richard Winter



If you fancy filling the 1 million sq. ft. of the dome canopy with champagne for the millennium you will need almost 3 billion bottles! The total cost for the first year is estimated as £758m which includes £260m for construction and infrastructure costs and £198m for the contents and central attraction which is accessed by a tunnel. The Millennium Commission Grant was £399m with an additional £150m from sponsorship with the balance to be obtained from sales, merchandising and disposal. Over £1m has been spent on IT by the NMEC.



## SCALANET SITES

- Construction Best Practice Programme- [www.cbpp.org.uk](http://www.cbpp.org.uk)
- National Construction Week- [www.ncw.org.uk](http://www.ncw.org.uk)
- Forests Forever- [www.forestsforever.org.uk](http://www.forestsforever.org.uk)
- UK Cast Stone Association- [www.uksa.co.uk](http://www.uksa.co.uk)
- Chubb Fire safety- [www.chubbfire.co.uk](http://www.chubbfire.co.uk)
- British Board of Agrément- [www.bbacerts.co.uk](http://www.bbacerts.co.uk)
- Training & development for construction professionals- [www.topic.org.uk](http://www.topic.org.uk)

A further list of websites which may be of interest to readers



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*Alan  
Howarth  
  
Minister  
for the  
Arts*

## Speech given on 10 Feb. to the London Forum of Civic and Amenity Societies

### INTRODUCTION

Thank you for your invitation to speak this evening. The invitation was originally made to Mark Fisher to follow up a speech he delivered in 1993 and I step with some trepidation into the shoes of someone with his depth of knowledge in Urban Design and indeed a book to his name, written in collaboration with Richard Rogers.

I understand that this gallery is part of Alan Baxter's property, and pay my respects to him. For some people it would be enough to be a highly regarded consulting engineer, but Alan adds to that an enthusiasm for the wider aspects of urban design, the provision of a gallery and a bit of help for young practices which are still finding their feet. Thank you, Alan, for providing our premises this evening and for all you do for the community.

As I came in, I greatly enjoyed the Light Sculpture by Diana Edmunds - a spectacular marriage of artistic creativity and modern technology and a lovely model of art in a public place. We must look for every opportunity for artists and architects to work together in the design of a building, and indeed the Government has encouraged this through our funding for the RSA Art for Architecture scheme.

### GOOD DESIGN

Among the enormous number of responses to our consultation papers of last July, there were many who said that 'Architecture' was too narrow a term: we should address 'Urban Design'. Meanwhile architects bemoan the growth of specialisms which may appear to annex or subdivide encroach on their territory: planners, landscape architects, interior designers, let alone project managers. Surely it is time to resume an all-embracing understanding of 'Architecture', which properly covers the whole field of design of the built environment.

'Good Design' is well understood by our financial colleagues: to them it means

'cost-effective'. It is also well understood by our aesthetes: it means 'it's beautiful'. I hardly need to remind this audience that good design means both, and the two elements are not mutually exclusive. We need a better dialogue and mutual understanding between those two camps

Those with an eye on value-for-money may sometimes be beguiled by the 'lowest cost' argument. I have the greatest sympathy for the person in the firing line, perhaps in a local authority and subject to a proper accountability, who has to argue the case for not accepting the lowest tender. However, most people accept that value for money involves investing in quality, not in accepting the lowest cost. The concept of whole-life costing, with its emphasis on longevity, economy of running costs and low maintenance, is now more widely appreciated, including within Government, particularly in the context of the Private Finance Initiative.

### PUBLIC BENEFIT

But we still have to work for the recognition that 'value' also means benefit to the public realm - benefit which cannot be reduced merely to a cash figure. It is many years since that argument was won in Covent Garden, with the result that we have a thriving and diverse area of small shops, public spaces and eating places, rather than just the office blocks which might have been a cash-cow, but would have aborted that part of London in terms of quality of life.

Another epic case was that of Coin Street, where there was a proposal for a massive office development including a new bridge across the river. It was designed to high standards, obtained the endorsement of, among others, the President of the RIBA, employed the best lawyers, but was brought to a standstill by the cogently presented opposition of the local community. That community has subsequently developed the site to its own agenda, and we can applaud the results. But there must be a better way of doing things.

Sadly the battle often has to be fought



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again on the next development site. It has happened with supermarkets all over the country, and all too often the community has lost. It is desperately difficult for ordinary people to challenge a development which may be deeply unpopular, but is driven by powerful interests who seem to have limitless resources to fight it through against planning objections.

*(Cont.)*

#### AMENITY GROUPS

It is deeply unsatisfactory if the skills and commitment and enthusiasm of amenity groups are only fully mobilised when they are resisting someone else's proposals, if they become engaged only when they are angry and negative. How do we generate a vision for our cities which will enthuse rather than outrage? How can we help this sleeping giant to look to the future and promote positively the sort of development which the community wants?

I believe that the picture has, in fact, improved since those days of Covent Garden and Coin Street. There may be a pointer in the Architecture Foundation's Roadshow. After a design initiative in Croydon several years ago, the action moved to the street-front in Southwark and the Roadshow has, in the last year, been in Hammersmith and Tower Hamlets. The approach which the Foundation has developed, so well demonstrated in the exhibition at Spitalfields, is to identify a set of problem spots, and invite suggestions from any member of the public in a mobile exhibition. I am told that schoolchildren in particular respond with enthusiasm and imagination, and that is a challenge to their elders to do likewise. The Foundation invites an architect, often acting in an honorary capacity, to work up the ideas into considered proposals. It is then up to the local authority, possibly with regeneration grants from national or European programmes, to implement the proposals. This is a powerful blend of imagination and planning, of community enthusiasm and professional expertise, of local and national resources. Educated people want to be heard. An amenity society - or a Forum of Amenity and Civic Societies - will understand the issues far better than the general population. But these are self-selecting

groups with limited ability to appeal to the sympathies of a wider population. The Roadshow seeks a further reach. How are we to spread more widely the understanding of what a high quality built environment can bring to our lives?

#### OPEN DAYS

London Open House Weekend is a useful contribution. It provides an excellent opportunity for people to see buildings which are normally closed. Government buildings have gradually become involved, and the weekend now allows people to see not only our own modest offices in Cockspur Street, but places such as the Foreign Office which were strictly closed only a few years ago. And the national scheme, 'Heritage Open Days', for which the Civic Trust is funded by my Department, is by no means all about old buildings. Then we have Architecture Week, promoted by the Arts Council and the RIBA, which provides the opportunity to see how architects work. These schemes have proved immensely popular, and show that the interest is there.

The Government wants to seize on this interest. We want to encourage community participation. We want to increase understanding of the built environment at all levels of education, from the young child learning to observe and question the difference between buildings, to the trainee architect or planner, to the man in the street who simply wants to understand what is going on around him; and perhaps most important of all, the man or woman who, without any training, suddenly finds themselves the client for a building project.

#### DSR PROPOSALS

We hope that our new Architecture Body will take a lead in developing this interest.

When we issued our set of consultation papers last summer, we had an enormous response - well over 1000 people and organisations wrote in, and many of them commented on the proposals to give a new strong lead in architecture. The great majority said we should continue with an independent body dedicated to good architecture, and we are now taking steps to implement that. We advertised a couple of weeks ago for the Chairman and we hope to have the new body fully



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*(Cont.)*

operational in the autumn. We are using 'The Architecture Commission' as a working title, but that is not final and we are open to other suggestions. We see three main strands to its activities. The consultation responses showed a widespread regard, which we very much share, for the work of the Royal Fine Art Commission on design review and there was a clear wish that it should continue. It was notable that this regard came from, among others, some architects whose schemes have been criticised by the Commission. Responses indeed from some former Commissioners confirmed that there is no lack of rigour when Commissioners themselves present projects to their fellows. They too have sometimes received sharp criticism. The records show that a very high proportion of the Commission's criticisms are taken on board, at least in part. So the first strand for the Architecture Commission is that we intend this design review function to continue, with the same degree of professionalism.

But there is a limit to the impact which can be achieved by design review of schemes of national importance. The second strand is that we want to create a body which will have more scope to be a powerful advocate for good architecture. We believe that the development of a proactive stance requires among other things the ability to give grants, so that the 'champion' can actively promote activity over a much wider span than it can itself cover. The Arts Council Architecture Unit has pioneered this and has a valuable, but limited, programme of grants. Rather than have two small programmes trying to do much the same thing, we are transferring the Arts Council provision to the new body and adding new money so that this programme can be expanded. A main function for the grants programme will be to encourage and support the development of public understanding of architecture, and of the design issues which impact on people's lives, whether they live in the town or the country.

The third strand for the Architecture Commission will be to develop a regional dimension in order to ensure truly national coverage. It may be appropriate to carry out some of the design review

work in regional subcommittees led by Commissioners of the national body, while still bringing the most important schemes before the full Commission. We shall also be asking the new body how it can work in conjunction with regional architecture centres, supporting those which already exist and encouraging the creation of new ones. I had the pleasure before Christmas of launching the Architecture Centres Network. They are a small and fragile group at present, but the example of the best, and experience in the Netherlands, suggests that there is great scope for these centres to provide a means of involving local communities in architectural issues. I shall be going to the Netherlands next week to see for myself what they have achieved, and how they have gone about it.

I asked earlier how we can spread the enthusiasm and energy of amenity groups to a wider audience. I believe that Regional Architecture Centres could be the key to this. I have already mentioned the example of the Architecture Foundation's Roadshow, where the promoters have identified particular problem sites and involved the local community directly in looking for solutions. We have the Gillingham Laundry, where the North Kent Architecture Centre organised a weekend workshop in which local people debated possible uses for a redundant building and have now gained an excellent community centre.

To come back to our new body for architecture - we advertised last month for the Chairman. He (by which of course I mean he or she) will clearly be the key figure in this - the ambassador and catalyst who will determine whether the Architecture Commission ticks along or provides real inspiration. We hope to make an appointment in April. Until then we shall be doing a lot of preparatory work, with the help of a small Implementation Group, but we don't want to specify the Chairman's clothes before he is identified, so we shall not be taking many irrevocable decisions. Once the Chairman is appointed, we shall then have a few months to mobilise seriously, and the new body should be fully operational after the summer break.

#### URBAN DESIGN

A number of our consultation responses

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last summer wanted us to put a specific emphasis on urban design. This emphasis was developed in a valuable meeting which I had during the autumn with the Urban Design Alliance, when we found that we had much in common. It is our firm intention that the Architecture Commission should cover urban design. We need to regenerate run-down areas. We need to improve the quality of our public spaces. We need to meet the expectations of the vast number of tourists who visit our country every year.

*(Cont.)*

Perhaps most important, we need to make our towns and cities into places in which people want to live - to strengthen our culture of urbanism. As a nation, we have a deeply ingrained addiction to property - it probably goes back to the Saxon tradition of the Yeoman Freeholder. It is not just a matter of owning the house, but also a patch of open space in which the children can play, in which we can sit on a summer evening. We enjoy the green countryside, the playing fields and the sight-lines which a cityscape cannot offer. But we cannot forever go on with the encroachment of suburbia into the country. So we must work to make the cities more attractive places to live, with different advantages which will match those of the suburbs or the country. The renewal of our suburbs and of our confidence in suburban living must be part of this conception.

Among the privileges of city living is the opportunity to enjoy the theatres, the museums, the art galleries - and central to the purposes of my Department is to make these opportunities accessible to more people. In a time of creative activity, they are going to find some spectacular improvements over the next few years, with the development of the great courtyard in the British Museum, the new Tate at Bankside, and not least the V&A where I congratulate the Planning Committee of the Royal Borough on their courageous decision to back Daniel Libeskind's Spiral. It will be controversial, like so many buildings that have lived to become much loved landmarks. It will probably feature, like the Lloyds Building, in lists of both the best ten and the worst ten buildings in London. But we do not achieve masterpieces without taking risks.

what are the attractions for someone who might in some way prefer the suburbs? Are there community areas where we can sit and chat with the neighbours without being deafened by traffic? Are there safe areas to play where we can kick a ball around with the children? Can we travel to school or to the shops safely? Here are challenges for urban design.

Some of the negative factors are fairly obvious. Above all we need to rescue our cities from the domination of motor traffic with its attendant noise, atmospheric pollution and barriers to pedestrians. The World Squares project will be an important move in this direction. But control of traffic is easier said than done, since shops and restaurants need their goods deliveries and there is a limit to the potential of walking or cycling. And even the Jubilee Line Extension, for all its imaginative architecture and user-friendly stations, will be no use for carriage of goods. There is a delicate juggling act to be done here, and a demanding task for the most imaginative urban designers.

#### LIVING IN THE CITY

If the city centre is to be regarded as 'home', we need to bring back the scope for substantial numbers of people to live there, so that these areas do not die when the commuters go home. The Government is insisting that more development should be on brownfield sites. The comment has been made that the tube late at night used to be frightening, but there are now so many people returning to the suburbs that there is comfort in a crowd. With more people living in the city centre, streets where at the moment people feel nervous could similarly be restored to an atmosphere of Londoners and neighbourliness.

Partly due to the last slump in the office market, we have made some progress with this; redundant office buildings have been turned into residential units, notably in the Shell Tower at Waterloo and in Alexander Fleming House at the Elephant.

In Mayfair there is a happy coincidence of interests. After the last war a number of large buildings were converted to offices, with a change-of-use approval which was valid for 50 years; now those

So much for the city enthusiasts. But

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approvals are falling in at just the right moment, and the buildings are being converted back to residential apartments.

There has also been some degree of return to the flats over shops, which so often stood empty and wasted. And of course there has been the wave of conversions of dockside warehouses and, in some of the old industrial centres, of redundant mills. These conversions of course make sound ecological sense, not only making considerable strides towards that figure of 4 million new homes, but giving new life to capital assets which would otherwise be destroyed.

*(Cont.)*

### CONSERVATION

This brings us to the difficult question of how much we should preserve, and how much we should clear away to make space for good new development. Undoubtedly there will be differing opinions within this forum, and there are no easy answers.

One can sympathise with the child asking his mother: "When will London be finished?" There are building sites all around us and everything seems to be changing. Of course we must preserve the best of our existing architecture and I believe that our listing system is a well designed instrument for that purpose. On a broader scale people find a much-needed sense of stability in valued old buildings, and they tend to support the conservationists. Others feel that this sometimes stifles creativity and leaves us stuck with outdated values. However, the old and the new are all part of the same world. The best of new architecture often complements and enriches what is already there. What is clear, from too much post-war listing, is that the lessons of centuries of building are ignored at our peril: some of the problems of the sixties demonstrated that the traditional detailing was indeed based on sound reasons.

Before Christmas there was the meeting of the four Richards, when Rogers, MacCormac and Coleman came to see my colleague Caborn, to plead for a relaxation on the controls in Conservation Areas. The guidance in PPG 15 seems to me to be about right, allowing a proper degree of discretion to local planning authori-

ties. We must obviously honour the intent to preserve the character of these areas, but we must also be prepared to replace mediocre existing buildings with excellent new ones. The preface to Johnson's English Dictionary reminds us that: "Change is not made without inconvenience, even from worse to better."

### PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

We need a range of professional skills to achieve these changes. The Urban Design Alliance is promoting Urban Design as something in its own right, to which architects, planners, engineers, surveyors, and the community, must all contribute. The planner should surely have a positive role, and not just be the policeman. But the main inspiration will probably come from the architect.

The real skill of the architect is to anticipate the client's underlying needs. The highest accolade is the response: "That is exactly what I wanted, but I hadn't thought of it." The Millennium Village in Greenwich is an attempt to do that - to provide what people will really want in their housing in the next generation, rather than continuing to provide what they have been accustomed to in the past.

### JOINED-UP GOVERNMENT

Planning decisions, such as the Millennium Village, lie of course with John Prescott's Department, not mine. But we are serious about 'joined up government'. DCMS Ministers are in regular contact with our DETR colleagues about our mutual interests, and we are developing our links on architectural issues both with the Treasury and with DfEE - we take the educational angles very seriously.

We have also had discussions with NHS Estates. They have convincing evidence that high quality design has a direct effect on patient response - and there must surely be a lesson for office employers or those who promote domestic contentment. NHS Estates have also produced some fine health centres which provide an excellent environment for staff and patients and, in a modest way, do exactly what we want in raising the quality of urban environment. The Treasury runs a group - the Government Construction Clients Panel - which seeks to improve the performance of



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Government as a Client, and this group is well aware of the importance of design quality.

#### REGIONAL AGENDA

We are also strongly committed to the regional agenda. We shall be setting up new arrangements to consolidate the work of our various cultural sectors in the regions. This is part of our approach to 'joined-up' Government. Our new Regional Cultural Consortia will bring together representatives of the cultural and creative interests in a new body for each region that can speak authoritatively and with a single voice for 'culture' in the widest sense, allowing decisions to be taken closer to the grassroots. By identifying the diverse elements of regional culture and the priorities for their region, the consortia will be able to work with other regional partners such as the RDAs to promote cultural interests and to influence the social and economic development of the region.

We are still consulting about the precise form that these regional consortia will take. But architecture must be included as part of the cultural world and I hope that some architects, and perhaps some individuals from groups such as civic societies as well as English Heritage, may become directly involved.

We are also putting additional DCMS staff to work in each of the Government regional offices. Together with the consortia, they will be well placed to advise us about regional policies and needs. The arrangements will of course be somewhat different in London, where the key developments will come next year with the establishment of the Mayor and the new Greater London Authority. The Mayor will in future appoint the Cultural Strategy Group for London, a body building on the work of the old London Heritage Forum, to provide expert advice in these areas. But the effect will be similar - to create a group which can provide an integrated oversight for the whole cultural spectrum.

#### THE FUTURE

We are exploring, in a complex pattern of discussions, the implications of the broad prospectus we set out last year.

The appointment of our new Chairman will obviously be a key point in the development of our strategy. There will be new initiatives for architecture arising out of the Urban Taskforce and we shall be working to develop the design agenda across Government.

I would like to finally return to that child, asking "When will London be finished?" Children have an insatiable curiosity, and need informed people to provide them with the answers. Why does London keep changing? What is that man doing? Why are old buildings stone but new ones glass?

Who will be able to provide the answers?

- Before Christmas I visited a school in Kent where the Lottery-funded 'Arts 4 Everyone' programme had provided two architects-in-residence for a limited period, and students were being guided in such matters as redesigning their canteen area.
- Bodies like the Building Experiences Trust take teams into schools to provide hands-on experience with building materials and structures.
- And the RFAC is arranging publication of its Student Teacher's winning project, showing how the local built environment can be used as a teaching resource for so many different subjects.

These initiatives will help to provide not only the future building professionals, but better informed clients and a knowledgeable and articulate public. We owe it to that child and to all in a new generation to enable the creation of a worthy built environment for the next century.

Alan Howarth  
Minister for the Arts

SCALA welcomes the role of 'The Architecture Commission' and the new emphasis on value for the built environment rather than lowest cost. SCALA is hoping to contribute, through its well established regional base, to the wide ranging work of the Commission in the field of design which has a strong regional flavour. The local knowledge and expertise of our members could provide invaluable input to the subcommittees, regional architec-

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# SCALAResponse to the Review of Architectural Education



RIBA Director of Education  
66 Portland Place, London W1N 4AD

Dear Sir

We welcome the Review. It is timely and reflects the need to monitor and evaluate what we are doing and to ensure it is appropriate to the circumstances of today. Perhaps, indeed, reviews should be more frequent - certainly the pace of change and the need to respond to it is never likely to slow down.

*Richard  
Winter*

*Chairman  
of the Prof.  
Affairs  
Committee*

We appreciate and support most of the content of the Consultation Document. Having established that point, however, we do wish to draw attention to issues that, from our reading, have received inadequate coverage in the body of the report.

And they are quite fundamental issues. Early in the Document are the following quotes:

- "[the need to create an]... architectural profession ... valued by society at large" - extract from Leonie Miller's quote (RIBA News Release)
- "it [the review] wishes to overcome a sense of disconnection between practice and academia ..." (Foreword, para 2)
- "In this period of massive change it is critical that architecture, and the values it represents, is understood ..." (Aims, para 4)
- "Architecture, in this environment [i.e. the market] needs to be recognisable ..." (strategy, para 1)

And two front-page articles in recent Building Design (Marco Goldschmeid's 'raising the profile' and another headlines 'Labour attacks elitism') continue these themes.

Perhaps the themes could be best summarised as:

- 1-the problem of the perception and understanding of our profession by 'the outside world' - our ultimate client base.
- 2-the associated problem of elitism within but particularly in relation to external perception of the profession.

and the Consultation Document, having acknowledged these points then appear to give no specific indication of how the proposals address them.

The words 'specific indication' are used

above because it may be that the tenor of the paper as a whole is intending to address these issues. We would suggest, however, that the 'means' to these ends are spelled out more directly. Furthermore, there seem to be a few counter-indicators.

It is evident, though, that these are problems too big to ignore. Perhaps the latest major manifestation of the first, certainly, is in the emerging proposals for Governmental Procurement Guidelines. These are indicating a potentially very far-reaching 'sidelining' of the operational side of the profession by major contractors - and all in the name of partnering!

In relation to both problems, while it must be right to drive up educational standards, this will not provide a solution if clients, employers and even contractors still do not understand what we do. Proposals must in part indicate the mechanism for client education.

Pursuing that theme, there is concern that the proposals for specialisation etc (anticipating, perhaps the Procurement Guidelines noted above) may exacerbate the lack of 'lay' understanding of the profession's role. Even the present partial understanding of what "architect" means and does, may become more confused. Furthermore perceptions of elitism may grow in strength.

Further potential counter-indicators emerge in relation to 'elitism' and exacerbating an 'academia vs workplace' divide: There appears to be a suggested phasing out of external examiners. We consider that such a move would be unhelpful on both counts. It would seem beneficial to ensure more of the 'workplace' (properly vetted) comes to 'academia' as well as, at present, 'academia' going to the 'workplace'.

Finally in relation to both these problems, the Review's concluding commentary refers to setting up 'colleges' of excellence. These present the potential for alienation, and for further exacerbating the relative isolated irrelevance of the RIBA in the eyes of much of the profession. Also there would be an almost inevitable elitism within the profession. The Institute and Council are urged in han-



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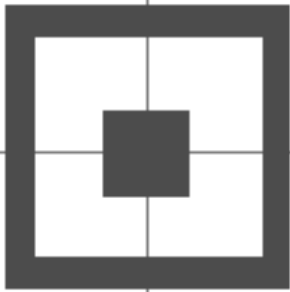


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Company Secretary and Administrator-Bernard Wyld Tel/Fax 01273 389323 E-Mail: info@scala.org.uk  
Finance Manager-David Kimmins Tel/Fax 0115 9846784 E-mail: policy@scala.org.uk  
For admin./publicity matters contact Bernard Wyld and for orders / subscriptions contact David Kimmins  
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